

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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## ANNOUNCEMENT

This issue of the paper is published in the absence of the Editor, and therefore goes out without any editorial matter. On Tuesday of last week we left for Winona Conference, and returned Wednesday of this week, when the paper was issued.

### I Wonder if You Are A Christian

It is not a hard matter to be a Christian. On the contrary, it is very easy. It may be difficult to make up your mind and to decide in favor of a Christian life. But all the trouble is with yourself in that respect. When you have fixed your purpose and taken the decisive step it is as easy as riding in a railway train among mountains and valleys, over bridges and thru tunnels. You take the train; the engine and the trainmen do all the rest. You could not lay the track. You could not build a car. You could not even run a locomotive. But when track, car, locomotive, engineer, conductor, and ticket are all ready for you, and you want to go, there is no difficulty. You consent and you go.

In being a Christian it does not depend on what you do or how you feel. It is, so far as you are concerned, a question of what you really want and what you will. The want and the will, the desire and the resolve, make what we call the ruling love of a man. If he covets wealth and resolves to have it, we say, "He loves money." If he craves learning and determines to attain it, we say, "He loves culture." Now the very soul of religion is love for truth and righteousness; that is,—rightness of soul toward God, toward God's ideal for man (which we call his "will," or "law"), and toward people. To love God and to love man is the substance, the essence, of all religion.

Now Jesus Christ has told man more about such things than anyone else. He packed into his short life of service—three years—more than all the sages, reformers, and teachers of all the centuries put together have been able to give us. He came to tell, but chiefly to show what real righteousness is. He taught; but he also lived. And his was a life of obedience and beauty, of prayer and of sympathy. He lived; but he also died. All that his death meant no one can tell. But it certainly sets forth the greatness of God's love for us, and the worth of our souls in God's sight, and the evil of sin and the power of holiness. He died "for us." As an old colored woman once put it, "He no die, me die. Me die, he no die." It is a mystery. Yes, but it is a mystery of love. It hangs like a dark and heavy cloud, but

like the Shekinah of old it hides radiance and glory at the heart of it—the radiance and glory of inconceivable and inextinguishable love.

To trust Jesus is the soul of subjective religion; to read the facts about him and "take them for true." You may trust him with your sins and weakness and evil tendencies—leaving yourself in his care as in sickness you cast yourself in utter helplessness on a kind friend, who is not only friend but skillful physician and tender nurse. You abandon yourself to such care.

You do not have to try to get Jesus to take you into his care. You do not have to try to get air and sunshine. There is such abundance of both that all you have to do is to let yourself alone and simply breathe and look. The air does its own work, and so does the sunshine, when both are permitted to have their own way. All you have to do is not to shut them off. Jesus is the air of the Spirit, in whom we live and move and have our being. He is the Son of righteousness, and there is healing, the balm of life, in his light. You cannot save yourself from self and sin. But you can be still and let Christ save you. You cannot furnish air for breathing, sunshine for seeing, or a Christ for saving; but you can breathe and look and trust.

Do you really want all this? Do you want deliverance from self and sin? Do you want to rest in God's provision for your spiritual life? Then do you will it? Can you say, do you say, "I will leave my soul, my sins, my past, my future, my all, with Jesus Christ?" If you really want and really will, then you really love. If Jesus were to ring the bell or knock, and you were to go to the door, and if you were sure—perfectly sure—that it was Jesus himself standing there, how would you feel? Would you be sorry or glad?

If he were then and there to call you by name, and say to you, "I know you. I know you better than you know yourself. And I am your best friend. I have come to ask you to turn over your past life to me; to turn over to me all your sins and sorrows and perplexities; to turn over to me all the possibilities of your future in this world and in the world to come. I will stand by you. I will help you. And I will never fail you"—if Jesus were to say all this to you, and if you knew beyond a doubt that it was surely Jesus of Nazareth, how would you feel? Glad? Would you say, "I will! I will! I leave everything with you. And I will take you into my life; nay, I will let you take me into your life. And I will stand up for you in everything I can. And I will try every day to be like you. And I will trust you to keep me forever in this resolve?"

Dear reader, you are a Christian. There is no doubt about it. And I congratulate you. Thank God for the air! Thank God for the sunshine! Thank God for a Savior!—BISHOP VINCENT.